GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1552
ANSWERED ON:27.11.2001
DECENTRALIZATION OF RURAL WATER SUPPLY SCHEMES
PRABHAT KUMAR SAMANTARAY

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to decentralize the rural water supply schemes in the country;

(b) if so, the aims of decentralization of the scheme;

(c) whether any deadline is proposed to be fixed to resolve drinking water problem in the rural areas of the country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ANNASAHEB M.K. PATIL)

(a) & (b) Drinking water supply being a State subject, schemes for providing drinking water facilities to rural habitations are implemented by the States from their own resources. The Government of India supplements the efforts of the States by providing financial assistance under the Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP) and Drinking Water Supply component of the Prime Minister`s Gramodaya Yojana (PMGY).The State Governments have already been delegated with the powers to plan, sanction and implement individual rural drinking water supply schemes.

The Government of India has introduced reforms in the Rural Water Supply sector, which envisages to institutionalise community based rural water supply system by incorporating the following three basic principles for ensuring peoples` participation:

- Adoption of a demand-driven responsive and adaptable approach based on empowerment of villagers to ensure their full participation in the project through a decision making role in the choice of scheme design, control of finances and management arrangements;

- Shifting role of Government from direct service delivery to that of facilitator.

- Partial cost sharing either in cash or kind or both and 100% responsibility of Operation & Maintenance by end-users.

It has been decided to implement the reforms in 63 pilot districts across the country on a pilot basis, out of which 62 projects have already been sanctioned for implementation. These projects are implemented in a decentralized manner.

(c) & (d) The National Agenda for Governance of the Government of India envisages provision of drinking water supply facilities to all rural habitations in the country by the year 2004. As per the Comprehensive Action Plan (CAP) prepared on the basis of information furnished by the State Governments, this objective could be achieved subject to availability of funds.